

HELP WANTED:

Highlights from the Second Quarter, 2004 Louisiana Job Vacancy Survey

Lafayette Regional Findings

Louisiana Department of Labor
Developed by the Research & Statistics Division
for the Office of Workforce Development



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WHERE are the vacancies?

Lafayette Vacancies by Occupational Group

Occupational Group	Number of Vacancies	Employment in Occupation	Percent Requiring More than a High School Diploma	Percent Requiring at Least Some Work Experience	Median Hourly Wage Offered
Transportation & Material Moving	1,212	20,710	1.49%	30.16%	\$5.50
Sales & Related	1,191	26,010	2.51%	61.27%	\$6.00
Office & Administrative Support	1,034	40,560	4.12%	83.25%	\$8.65
Construction & Extraction	819	20,380	15.42%	92.04%	\$11.00
Healthcare Practitioner & Technical	789	12,870	83.45%	60.17%	\$16.50
Food Preparation & Serving Related	782	18,610	22.68%	44.33%	\$4.15
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	602	15,150	50.27%	91.46%	\$10.50
Production	557	21,350	23.61%	95.23%	\$12.00
Personal Care & Service	455	4,610	23.11%	81.64%	\$6.00
Healthcare Support	261	6,020	67.19%	42.81%	\$6.00
Non-Classifiable Occupations	195	NA	37.24%	95.24%	\$6.50
Education, Training & Library	108	12,750	0.00%	33.33%	\$5.50
Computer & Mathematical Science	77	1,420	89.79%	47.08%	\$8.00
Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	77	6,560	0.00%	27.73%	\$6.00
Architecture & Engineering	73	4,370	89.92%	100.00%	\$10.00
Protective Service	58	4,650	6.77%	18.80%	\$7.35
Management	52	13,370	100.00%	100.00%	\$10.50
Life, Physical & Social Science	43	970	0.00%	100.00%	\$8.00
Community & Social Services	36	2,390	100.00%	100.00%	\$12.02
Business & Financial Operations	21	5,010	0.00%	100.00%	\$29.40
Farming, Fishing & Forestry	2	410	0.00%	0.00%	\$5.40
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports & Media	0	1,320	NA	NA	NA
Legal	0	1,730	NA	NA	NA
Total, All Occupational Groups	8,444	241,220	24.47%	66.45%	\$7.35

Job titles with many openings

Sailors & Marine Oilers (501 openings)
 Retail Salespersons (466)
 Cashiers (442)
 Waiters & Waitresses (415)
 Registered Nurses (359)
 Personal & Home Care Aides (299)
 Customer Service Representatives (273)
 Truck Drivers (Light or Delivery Services) (262)
 Machinists (253)
 Licensed Practical & Vocational Nurses (225)

Lafayette Vacancies by Industry Group

Industry Group	Number of Vacancies	Industry Employment	Vacancy Rate	Median Hourly Wage Offered
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	2,043	56,503	3.62%	\$6.00
Education & Health Services	1,456	51,844	2.81%	\$10.00
Leisure & Hospitality	1,320	21,078	6.27%	\$5.15
Construction	870	16,983	5.12%	\$10.50
Professional & Business Services	693	21,168	3.27%	\$6.00
Financial Activities	666	14,022	4.75%	\$14.00
Manufacturing	579	20,843	2.78%	\$9.61
Natural Resources & Mining	504	22,898	2.20%	\$12.00
Information	289	4,296	6.72%	\$9.00
Other Services	25	6,457	0.39%	\$8.50
Total, All Industry Groups	8,444	236,092	3.58%	\$7.35

WHAT do these numbers mean ?

There were 8,444 reported vacancies in the Lafayette Regional Labor Market Area (RLMA), for an overall vacancy rate of 3.58 percent, meaning that for every 100 jobs, approximately four were vacant at the time of the survey. More than 1,200 of these vacancies were in Transportation & Material Moving occupations, and this group accounted for about 14 percent of all vacancies in the area. Within this broad occupational category, Sailors & Marine Oilers appeared to be in very high demand; there were with over 500 vacancies for this job title in the Lafayette area.

Education and experience requirements varied widely across occupational groups. For example, in Healthcare Practitioner & Technical occupations, more than 83 percent of openings required education past high school, and well over half -- 60.17 percent -- required at least some work experience. By contrast, Transportation & Material Moving occupations required little education and experience: fewer than two percent of these openings required more than a high school diploma, and less than a third required any work experience. Wages varied by occupation, as well. The overall median wage offered for vacancies across all occupations was \$7.35 per hour; but wages ranged from \$4.15 in Food Preparation & Serving Related occupations* to \$29.40 in Business & Financial Operations occupations.

The table above shows Lafayette vacancies by industry group. (See the sidebar on page 5 of this report for more on the differences between *industries* and *occupations*.) The Trade, Transportation & Utilities industry had the highest number of vacancies in the Lafayette RLMA, accounting for nearly one in four of all openings. Vacancies in this industry were relatively low paying, with median wages at just \$6.00 per hour.

A SNAPSHOT

of Lafayette job vacancies

Overall, Lafayette area employers were seeking experienced workers. More than two thirds of all reported vacancies required at least some previous work experience. Thirty-four percent of vacancies required some experience in any field; another 21 percent required up to two years of experience in the same field, and 11 percent required over two years of experience in the same field.

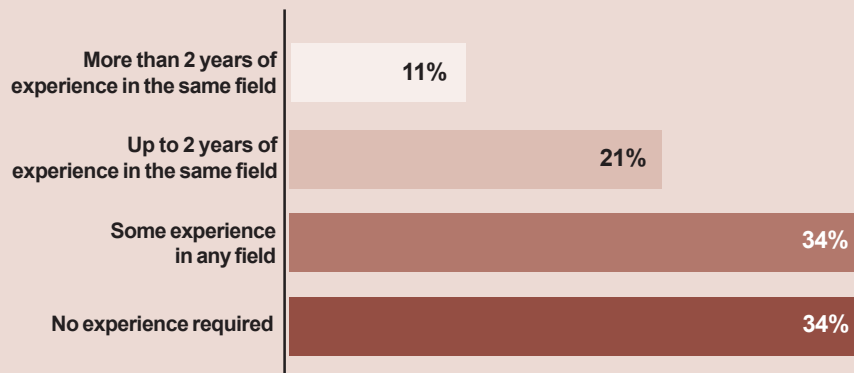
On the other hand, just *two percent* of Lafayette's vacancies required a four-year college degree or higher. Only one percent required a bachelor's degree, and another one percent required an advanced degree. The sidebar to the left provides more information on education levels in job vacancies.

For half of all job vacancies in Lafayette, employers offered wages of \$7.00 per hour or less. The largest share of vacancies (36 percent) offered wages between \$5.16 and \$7.00 per hour. At the other end of the spectrum, approximately 13 percent of all vacancies offered wages of more than \$16.00 per hour.

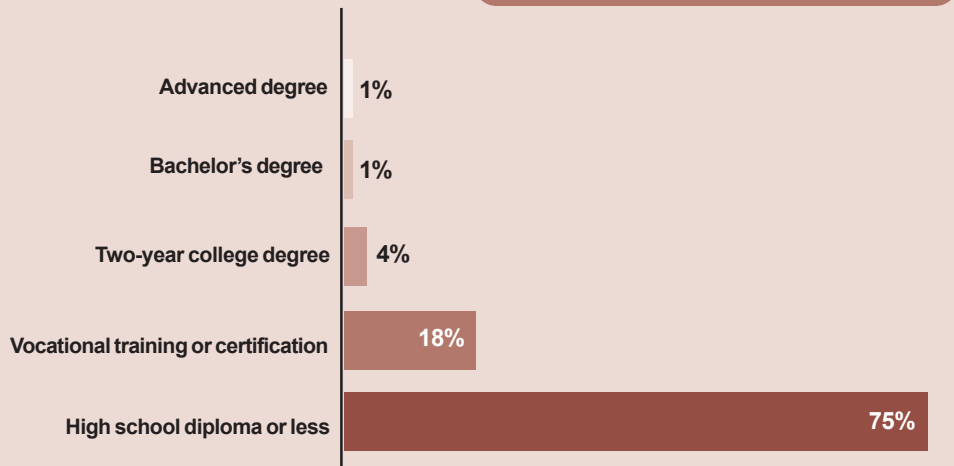
Why do most vacancies require a high school diploma or less?

The picture painted by these figures may look grim, but there is a good reason why most vacancies require little education. Simply put, occupations that require less education tend to have more turnover, all else equal. The latest estimate by the Bureau of Labor Statistics for median years of job tenure for professional and managerial workers was 4.8 in 2002. By contrast, sales workers, such as retail sales clerks, stayed a median 2.7 years and service workers, such as food service employees, stayed a median 2.4 years. Since retail sales clerks, food service workers, and other such jobs have high turnover, it stands to reason that these occupations, which require little formal education, will have many vacancies at any given point in time. To get a sense of the demand for workers over and above turnover levels, see the "hiring demand index" on page 7 of this report.

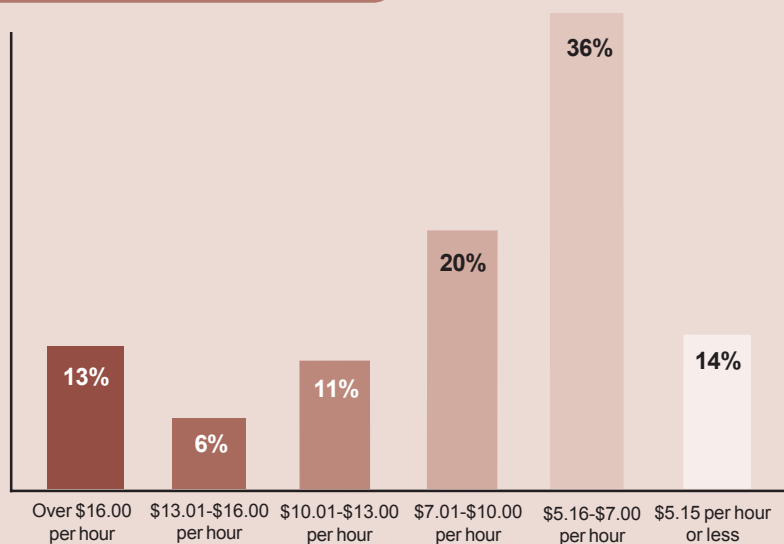
How much experience do Lafayette job vacancies require?



How much education do Lafayette job vacancies require?



How much do Lafayette job vacancies pay?



What is the difference between an *industry* and an *occupation*?

An industry is a group of businesses, categorized according to the goods and services they provide. An occupation is a group of workers, categorized according to the skills they have and what they do on the job. For example, *health care* is an industry that includes many occupations -- doctors, nurses, administrators, and secretaries, to name a few. But *secretary* is an occupation that can be found in almost any industry. Each industry contains a variety of occupations, and many occupations -- such as janitors, computer support professionals, and database analysts -- can be found in every industry.

What did EMPLOYERS say?

Employers' Responses to the Open-Ended Question:

*"In trying to fill this position,
what is the greatest difficulty you have faced, if any?"**

Reported Difficulty	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
<i>"We have been unable to find qualified applicants."</i>	66	21.9%
<i>"Qualified applicants will not work for the compensation package we offer."</i>	13	4.3%
<i>"We have been unable to find applicants with the specific experience / training / skills / certification that we are seeking."</i>	56	18.6%
<i>"There is a shortage of people in this occupation."</i>	41	13.6%
<i>"[Some aspect of the job] is undesirable to applicants." (The position requires odd hours / the position is temporary / the position involves shift work)</i>	41	13.6%
<i>"The work ethic of people, once they are hired, is unacceptable." (People don't show up for work / if they do show up, they don't work / they can't pass drug tests)</i>	13	4.3%
<i>"Turnover - keeping people once they have been hired is the biggest problem."</i>	4	1.3%
<i>Some other difficulty mentioned</i>	1	0.3%
<i>No response</i>	66	21.9%
Total	301	99.8%

* Confidentiality concerns precluded publishing employers' verbatim responses. However, LDOL analysts reviewed all responses to the question above, grouped similar responses together, then re-worded the similar responses into one representative sentence or phrase, as shown above. Data shown in this table are unweighted. Percentages may not total to 100 percent due to rounding.

Major Occupational Group	Number of Vacancies	Vacancy Rate	Hiring Demand Index*	Median Number of Days Position was Vacant
Transportation & Material Moving	1,212	5.85%	High	14
Sales & Related	1,191	4.58%	Average	14
Office & Administrative Support	1,034	2.55%	Low	14
Construction & Extraction	819	4.02%	Average	60
Healthcare Practitioner & Technical	789	6.13%	High	60
Food Preparation & Serving Related	782	4.20%	Low	14
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	602	3.97%	High	30
Production	557	2.61%	Average	90
Personal Care & Service	455	9.87%	High	90
Healthcare Support	261	4.34%	Average	30
Non-Classifiable Occupations	195	NA	NA	2
Education, Training & Library	108	0.85%	Low	21
Computer & Mathematical Science	77	5.42%	High	14
Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	77	1.17%	Low	5
Architecture & Engineering	73	1.67%	Low	90
Protective Service	58	1.25%	Low	30
Management	52	0.39%	Low	120
Life, Physical & Social Science	43	4.43%	High	14
Community & Social Services	36	1.51%	Low	21
Business & Financial Operations	21	0.42%	Low	10
Farming, Fishing & Forestry	2	0.49%	Low	14
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports & Media	0	0.00%	NA	NA
Legal	0	0.00%	NA	NA
Total, All Occupations	8,444	3.50%		21

Taking all of the labor shortage indicators together (vacancy rates, hiring demand index, and the length of time positions remained vacant) two occupational groups appeared to be experiencing moderate shortages: Healthcare Practitioner & Technical and Personal Care & Service. Both of these groups had vacancy rates higher than the overall average of 3.5 percent, both scored high on the hiring demand index, and both had vacancies that remained open for relatively long periods of time, indicating that employers faced difficulties in filling these openings. Other occupational groups with large numbers of vacancies, such as Transportation & Material Moving and Sales & Related, did *not* appear to be in shortage situations.

*The Hiring Demand Index indicates whether demand for workers in an occupational group is more than what we would expect from turnover levels alone. A "high" score on the Hiring Demand Index means that, all else equal, a labor shortage is **likely**, because there are more openings than we would expect to see from normal turnover alone. A "low" score means that a labor shortage is **unlikely**, because there are **not** more openings than we would expect to see from turnover alone. See the back cover of this report for more details on this measure.

Are there
LABOR SHORTAGES
 in Lafayette?

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Second Quarter 2004 Job Vacancy Survey Findings are available for the state of Louisiana as well as all eight regional labor market areas (RLMAs). To order copies, or for more information, please contact the Louisiana Department of Labor's Research and Statistics Unit at (225) 342-3141, or toll-free at (888) 302-7662. You may also download any Job Vacancy Survey product from our Web site: www.LAWORKS.net/qm_JVSoverview.asp.

TECHNICAL NOTES

for the Second Quarter 2004
Job Vacancy Survey

THE SAMPLE

The Job Vacancy Survey was based on a random sample of Louisiana business establishments covered by Louisiana's unemployment insurance tax laws. The sample was stratified by firm size, region (including all eight regional labor market areas in Louisiana) and industry. This sample excludes certain types of establishments: small businesses with self-employed owners and some non-profit and religious organizations which are not covered by UI tax laws. In addition, the sample is limited to **private employers only. The vacancies reported in this study do not include openings with any federal, state, or local government entities in Louisiana.** The total sample size was 9,544. The overall response rate for this survey was 39.1%.

JOB VACANCY RATES

Vacancy rates are computed as the number of vacancies in an occupation divided by the total employment in that occupation. A vacancy rate of five percent means that for every 100 jobs, five were vacant at the time of the survey.

HIRING DEMAND INDEX

The Hiring Demand Index presented in this report measures demand for labor over and above the normal demand due to turnover. This measure, first constructed by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, is computed as follows:

(Job Vacancy Rate in the Occupation / Job Vacancy Rate in all occupations)

divided by

(Turnover rate in the occupation / Turnover rate in all occupations)

Job vacancy rates are calculated as discussed above, and national turnover rates were provided by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development. They were calculated using Current Population Survey (CPS) Job Tenure Supplement microdata.

The cost of publishing 2000 copies of this document was approximately \$450.00. This document was published by the Louisiana Department of Labor, Office of Occupational Information Services, Research and Statistics Division, and printed by Moran Printing, 5425 Florida Boulevard, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Its purpose is to disseminate information pertaining to labor market developments and employment trends under the authority of Part 602.6, Title 20, Chapter V. of the Code of Federal Regulations. This material was printed in accordance with the standards for printing by state agencies established pursuant to R.S. 43:31.